GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:180
ANSWERED ON:30.11.2015
Role of NGOs in Mid-Day Meal
George Shri (Adv.) Joice;Radhakrishnan Shri T.

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) engaged in preparing mid-day meals for children in rural areas have turned the scheme into a profit making exercise and deviated from the purpose and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Government is considering to eliminate the role of NGOs in preparing mid- day meal in rural areas and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the State Governments thereto;

(c) whether the Government proposes to formulate separate guidelines for NGOs in urban areas to operate centralised kitchens only where the schools are not supported with kitchens and cooking components and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to ensure mid-day meals are mandatorily tested by accredited labs each month for maintaining quality and nutrition?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(SMT. SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (c): The Mid Day Meal Scheme is not designed to be a profit making initiative but is a mechanism to deal with class room hunger so as to promote children's attendance and concentration in class room besides meeting other educational and social objectives. According to the MDM guidelines, it is desirable that mid day meal is cooked locally in the school premises either through Self-Help Groups or through the personnel engaged by the School Management Committee or any other equivalent Committee responsible for implementing the Scheme. However, for urban areas where there is space constraint for setting up of the school kitchens in the individual schools, the guidelines provide for Centralized kitchens for a cluster of schools where cooking can take place and cooked hot meal may be transported under hygienic conditions through reliable transport systems to various schools. The Mid Day Meal Rules 2015 notified by the Ministry reiterate these provisions of the Mid Day Meal Guidelines.

(d): The Mid Day Meal Rules 2015 notified under Section 39(1) of the National Food Security Act, 2013 state that hot cooked meal provided to children shall be evaluated and certified by the Government Food Research Laboratory or any other laboratory accredited or recognized by law so as to ensure that the meal meets with the prescribed nutritional standards and quality. The samples are to be collected at least once in a month from randomly selected schools or centralized kitchens for testing by such laboratories. These rules are in effect from 30th September, 2015.

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